



## Your right to **A FAIR GO** DISCRIMINATION – SEXUAL ORIENTATION

**Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or less favourably because of a personal characteristic. In Victoria it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their actual or assumed sexual orientation.**

### What does 'sexual orientation' mean?

Sexual orientation covers homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexuals and people perceived to fall into one of these groups.

Susan applies for a position as a receptionist with a large company. At the interview, she is asked about her outside interests. Susan lists a number of hobbies including membership of a lesbian choir. At this point the interviewer concludes the interview saying he does not feel Susan will fit into the workplace environment.

Andy, who is gay, works alongside Don who repeatedly puts postcards of nude men on Andy's desk and constantly asks male co-workers if Andy makes passes at them. Andy can lodge a complaint of sexual orientation discrimination and/or sexual harassment with the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.

### When is discrimination against the law?

Discrimination laws apply to public behaviour, not to private conduct.

The VEOHRC complies with Victorian privacy laws and the confidentiality provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 1995. For a copy of the VEOHRC's privacy policy, please go to [www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/privacy](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/privacy) or contact the VEOHRC.

DISCLAIMER: This information is intended as a guide only. It is not a substitute for legal advice.

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Public areas covered by the law include accommodation, clubs and club members, disposal of land, education, employment, goods and services, sport and local government.

Fran and Milly are members of a local tennis club that occupies Crown land. When it becomes obvious the pair are a couple, they begin to experience unfair treatment from the club. For example, whenever one of them telephones the club to book a time to play tennis, they are always told that no timeslots are available.

### How can the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission help?

We help resolve complaints of discrimination by offering a confidential, free and impartial resolution service with the aim of achieving a mutual agreement.

### Representative Complaints

Victoria's equal opportunity laws were amended on October 11 2006 making it possible for a person or representative body to lodge a complaint with the Commission on behalf of a named person or persons who believe they have been subjected to discrimination or sexual harassment. A representative must be either a person with the same complaint or an organisation with sufficient interest in the complaint.

Contact our free and confidential  
**Advice Line: (03) 9281 7100**  
TOLL FREE (country callers) 1800 134 142  
TTY: (03) 9281 7110  
Email: [information@veohrc.vic.gov.au](mailto:information@veohrc.vic.gov.au)  
Free interpreters are available on request